

Home-Based Behavioral Systems Family Therapy

Brief Program Description

This family therapy approach is used with families of juvenile offenders, between 6 and 18 years of age, and those at risk for juvenile offending and substance abuse. It is a brief structured model delivered in five phases by paraprofessionals and professionals in the participants' home. It is a modification of the Functional Family Therapy model. The orientation is psychoeducational and relies on reducing families' defensiveness, assessing their needs coincident with healthy family relationships, and skills training for parents and teens. Technical aids such as the Parenting Wisely CD-ROM program and videotapes are used at the beginning of treatment to increase commitment to the therapy as well as decrease time in treatment.

In the early phases, therapists are less directive and more supportive and empathic than in the later phases, when the family's cooperation and resistance is more conducive to increased therapist directiveness. This adapted model has been applied to multiple-offending, institutionalized delinquents, and targets families with lower educational levels and higher levels of pathology than the original Functional Family Therapy Model developed. Modifications were made for families in Appalachia and for inner-city African American families.

Long-range program outcome objectives include: reduced child involvement in the juvenile justice system; reduced self-reported delinquency; reduced teen pregnancy; reduced special class placement; increased graduation rates and; increased employment. Intermediate objectives include: decreased family conflict; increased cohesion; improved communication; improved parental monitoring, discipline, and support of appropriate child behavior; improved problem-solving abilities; improved parent-school communication; improved school attendance and grades and; improved child adjustment.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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